CENTER FOR THE EUB HERITAGE

TELESCOPE-MESSENGER

Center for the Evangelical
United Brethren Heritage

United Theological Seminary Dayton, Ohio

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WORDS FROM THE WISE

Through prevailing, soul stirring prayer I gained a greater confidence and trust in God.

- Jacob Albright, 1859

COMEBACK OF A LIFETIME

As we approach our next conference on Piety and Pietism, the question has been asked, "What is Pietism? While it may not be a question that can be answered simply, Rev. Gene Skipworth has offered his helpful thoughts and we are sharing them with all of you. --the editors

"Pietism" is a word that needs to make a comeback. There are other words that also need to make a comeback; caring, compassion, grace, and love.

"Pietism," a word not used much in the past three centuries, is not only a word, but a way of expressing one's faith. Pietism has a history of lifting humankind to a new level of faithfulness, new depth of devotion, and a joyful anticipation of hope.

The "Pietist Movement" embraced the "way the truth and the life of Jesus Christ." The Reverend Philipp Jakob Spener, a Lutheran from Frankfurt, Germany in the 17th century, is often considered the father of Pietism along with August Franke. For them, and those who came after, a pietist person, above all, followed the letter of intention mentioned in I John 2:6, "If you say you abide in him, you should walk in the same way that he walked."

Today, there is much said about the "demise of the Church and the Christian Faith." There needs to be life breathed back into the Church and the commitment of the followers of Christ.

Faith and the display of Christian love was void back in the 17th century just as we see so much evidence of void today. In 2024 we are anxious and fearful. The shallowness of the Church that prompted the Pietist movement is present today.

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An EUB Odyssey

--Steve O'Malley

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ as revealed through the persons and events of a spiritual family (familiarly hailed as the EUB) has shaped my life. The personal impact of its legacy may best be appreciated by the readers of this periodical entitled the *Telescope Messenger*. Older readers may fondly recall use of this name as the title for the venerable news journal of the Evangelical United Brethren throughout its twenty-one years in print from 1946 to 1968. Yes, and that is not the whole story.

Those readers really attuned to their spiritual roots may recall there were two earlier journals published under other configurations of that title: *Die Christliche Botschafter*, official journal of the Evangelische Gemeinschaft (aka: Evangelical Association/Evangelical Church) of North America, later appearing in English translation as *The Evangelical Messenger* (1836-1946). With this title we are introduced to the first and longest published German language religious journal in the United States, spanning an era from the early nineteenth century through the second World War and beyond.

Alongside this there was another religious periodical, *The Religious Telescope*, published by a sister denomination, The Church of the United Brethren in Christ (1834-1946). Early editions were published in English, the prevailing language among Midwesterners who became the focal population for the missional expansion of the United Brethren. This expansion was accelerated by the United Brethren shift to the English language much earlier than for the Evangelicals. By contrast, the missional focus for the Albright people (Evangelicals) was directed toward reaching that huge tide of migration from Germany to America in the nineteenth century.

In an era when denominational journals enjoyed more influence upon Americans, and others, than any other news source, these publications were the prime source of inspiration and information regarding both church and world. They were second only to the Bible for generations of United Brethren and Evangelicals in North America and beyond. Sister publications were available in overseas mission fields of the two denominations. A prime example was *Der Evangelische Botschafter*, published in Germany in the era from 1870-1946 and read by Evangelicals throughout Germany, Switzerland, East Prussia, Latvia, Transylvania, and Silesia.

This broadly cast legacy of gospel publications among these German American revivalists touched both young and old over the course of many generations, including the faith odyssey of the present author. Here are some mile markers, as they may be remembered from the present vantage point.

Firstborn in a Hoosier family of three siblings at the onset of the second World War, our parents were faithful members of an urban Evangelical congregation in the state capital, Indianapolis. Since there was a span of several years between myself and the younger kin,

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An EUB Odyssey

(cont'd)

and my parents were engrossed in making a life amid the uncertain and challenging onset of a World War, I curved into my imagination in a way that put me beyond the finality of my external circumstances.

Solace was found through escaping into the deep tranquility of Cambridge, a small Hoosier town remote from the city, yet built alongside the mighty National Road, the young nation's first Federal Highway, commissioned by President Washington to be built from Baltimore to Vandalia, Illinois, via Columbus, Dayton, Richmond, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute and then on to St. Louis and ultimately all the way to San Francisco. The old family home had been built alongside this route to the West in 1850 when hundreds of Conestoga wagons passed by per day transporting settlers into and beyond the Midwest. A large four story brick stagecoach inn was built a half mile west of our home in the 1840s, the Huddleston House, constructed by a Quaker family by that name to help travelers find their place of freedom and opportunity on the frontiers of a young nation. Some were identified as Evangelicals, others United Brethren, arriving from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. In the nearby Quaker haven of Richmond, the early schools (like Earlham) and churches for the Society of Friends added a peaceful presence that contrasted with the exuberance of the many young travelers to the unexplored West. By the time I was at Cambridge City, the old route was paved and traffic passed in a more orderly pace.

There I spent childhood days with aging and beloved relatives, deeply engrossed in the ethos of a Civil War era family patron steeped in the godly transparency of a life of itinerating Evangelical ministry whose life spanned the era from horse and buggy to the early jet age. The life of Monroe Lincoln Scheidler (1865-1953), my maternal great-grandfather, was then a tale of early rising to pray, then tending a henhouse, and large truck garden filled with vegetables to comfort the lives of challenged and often bereaved families living within his sphere of influence: throughout a broad span of fertile Wayne county, Indiana. He lived in an attic of the old homestead above the family of his only daughter, my great aunt. She was a Columbia-trained second grade teacher who also taught me math and grammar, interspersed with reading the Word and singing old gospel hymns with her father, reminiscent of their old days of serving congregations and camp meetings under appointment of the Indiana Conference of the Evangelical Association.

By the age of eleven I heard him introduced as "Brother Scheidler." He had become the oldest member of the annual conference, serving under appointment since 1887 in congregations throughout Indiana, into southeastern Illinois, and western Ohio, including the Wayne Avenue EV Church in Dayton. He recalled being ordained by Bishop J.J. Esher, Seybert's successor,[i] and, on one occasion, Great Grandfather told our family how the bishop directed the ordinands to kneel before the altar while singing, "I Need Thee Every Hour."

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COMEBACK OF A LIFETIME (cont'd.)

But, Pietism can transform lives with love and hope. Pietism can demonstrate the love of Christ to people of this fractured world. Pietism needs to make a comeback.

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Mark Your Calendars
Two important events for the Center for the EUB Heritage

Annual meeting of the Center for the EUB Heritage - October 23, 2025, 10 am: The annual meeting is open to all members of the center and is scheduled in conjunction with the Pietism conference. You may participate in person or online. To register, follow the link below.

Heirs of Pietism in World Christianity 2 Conference - October 23-25, 2024:

Pietism has played an important role within World Christianity. This conference, sponsored by the Center for the EUB Heritage, aims to uncover foundations, pillars, connections, and people that have given expression to Pietist faith and life, especially within the EUB heritage. You may participate in person or online. CEUs are available.

Please Visit the following url in order to register for one or both of these important events:
https://united.edu/heirs-of-pietism-in-world-christianity/

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"Remembering for the Future"
Campaign to Begin in October

The Center for the EUB Heritage was formed in 1979 to create a repository for Evangelical, United Brethren, and EUB materials, AND to communicate and interpret the heritage of those theological movements. The Center has been supported by United Theological Seminary (one of two former EUB seminaries) and by persons committed to preserving the richness of the EUB experience. The majority of these persons were a part of the EUB Church at a point in their lives.

Recently, the Advisory Council of the Center realized that, if the Center was going to continue to enable research and interpretation, funding needed to come from beyond those loyal supporters. At the same time, the Council believes that the depth of theology and practice of the EUB Church has pertinence for the larger church today and tomorrow.

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Meeting at the Archives by Andy Wood

Greetings!

In our last issue, Dr. Sarah Blair reported for the archives on a wonderful donation of the portrait of Bishop Spreng! This time we want to add to that acknowledgement by saying that we are most grateful for all our donors, our colleagues, and our partners. Two of our newest donations are from an individual and another institution.

Rev. James Wagner (United alum) donated a piece of artwork by great EUB church leader and artist Ralph M. Holdeman, *The Jerusalem Cross.* It is displayed in the academic wing of the seminary along with another Holdeman piece named *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

In addition, a donation of EUB materials was received in transfer from Nancy Watkins at the Southeast Jurisdictional Conference on Archives and History (SEJCAH) at Lake Junaluska. With the closure of the SEJ Heritage Center, most of the holdings went to Emory University, but our Center received many EUB items including many annual conference records and histories we did not previously have, and ranging from an 1889 UB Discipline to bound records of the EUB Board of Evangelism 1947-1968. This collection may have been started by two sisters, Phyllis and Shirley Crouse. Former EUBs, they served as deaconesses at Red Bird Mission (or the former Red Bird Annual Conference, now the Central Appalachian Conference) when it was EUB and continued working there for years after the 1968 union. Both were very active in the SEJ Historical Society and the SEJ Commission on Archives and History.

All these donations make it possible to keep our EUB heritage alive and not just for researchers. For example, after the donation of the "Bonebrake" alma mater hymn, reported on in the Summer 2023 issue of the TM, we inquired about using it in chapel services. Its first such use was at a special All Saints' service which was held in the newly rearranged O'Brien Library. The space is now suited to such worship, as the north end of the library has received a new purpose. The northeast corner now holds a small EUB museum curated by our staff librarian, Mark Condy! The 1896 organ, formerly housed at Harvard Boulevard, was heard again in worship as we gave thanks to God for the communion of saints and anticipated the new creation! Worship materials from the EUB tradition were used and a brief history of the seminary and its relationship to the EUB tradition were read. That history drew upon archival EUB holdings at the Heritage Center and also the archives at Otterbein University. United's Dean of the Chapel, Dr. Tesia Mallory stated, "We are grateful for those who have gone before us in the faith and passed down a rich heritage." We believe that EUB-themed chapel services will now be a new tradition!

Another new tradition has been added with the help of Rachel Hurley in United's communications office—utilizing social media to advertise for the collections in honor of Archives Month (October). Our first #ArchivesMonth post was the 2nd-most-liked

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An EUB Odyssey

(contd.)

I also learned under Great Grandfather's tutelage that the first Evangelical Camp Meeting in Indiana had convened in 1840 on the homestead of John Dill (1800-1868), his maternal grandfather's homestead at Pleasant Hill, which was a Pennsylvania German community founded by Evangelicals, alongside Dunkers, and some United Brethren, three miles northwest of his later home in Cambridge City. The preacher, Absalom B. Schafer, was sent by Bishop John Seybert (1791-1860) and received by John Dill amid some measure of violent opposition ostensibly from some irate, anti-revival Lutherans who detested his godly and joyful witness to full salvation in Christ.[ii] The meetings were blessed with intercessory prayer, gospel preaching and fervent singing, with many souls brought to new birth in Christ and also the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit through the new birth of personal regeneration in their Lord Jesus Christ. Being an inquisitive historian, the present author checked the files of the *Christliche Botschafter* at United Theological Seminary and found a German language reference to that first camp meeting held in the state of Indiana by a preacher of the *Evangelische Gemeinschaft* in January 1840. Great Grandfather's story really happened!

In addition to such amazing oral history, tucked into a still unbroken plate-glass-covered shelf of his heavy wooden seven foot high bookcase,[iii] was Great Grandfather's annotated copy of *The Life of John Seybert*, published by the Evangelical Publishing House in Cleveland (1888). Years later, it would become my chief resource in reading and writing a study of Seybert's life and witness throughout the Evangelical Association of that antebellum era.[iv]

It now appears to this writer that this reminiscence from my early life, somehow linking me to these early figures of our EUB legacy, are but a foretaste of what I would like to share from our common heritage as Evangelical United Brethren. Perhaps there will be further opportunity to draw from this life odyssey as an EUB Christ follower.

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[i] After Bishop Joseph Long, see Raymond W. Albright, *History of the Evangelical Church* (Harrisburg: Evangelical Press, 1956), 183.

[ii] S.H. Baumgartner, *Historical Sketches of Indiana Conference of the Evangelical Association* (Published by the Indiana Conference, 1924), 310.

[iii] This bookcase, now in our home in, was reportedly built in 1889 by a craftsman member of Grandfather Scheidler's first preaching appointment in Atlanta, Indiana, and had been moved by train over the course of his ministry appointments. While a student at Indiana Central College (EUB) in Indianapolis, I was sent to preach to that congregation in 1961 and met an elderly gentleman who vividly remembered the ministry of my great grandfather and the lives he touched for Christ.

[iv] J. Steven O'Malley, *John Seybert and the Evangelical Heritage* (Emeth Press, 2008), on the life and labors of Seybert, the founding bishop of the Evangelical Association. Scheidler was ordained at the Indiana Conference meeting at New York Street Evangelical Church, Indianapolis, where, in 1891, the denomination was divided into two segments for thirty years.

Meeting at the Archives (contd.)

United post on Instagram during October. Other #ArchivesMonth-related posts also received positive reactions from the seminary's Instagram followers, who tend to be younger prospective students.

This and other efforts are being exerted to help advance an understanding of our archives. The need to advocate for archival collection and preservation has become increasingly critical in the present moment when budgets are often tightening and growing dissention calls into question the value of "those" records or "that" history. Our forebears created, collected, and defended these collections, and we are thrilled to receive new collections. But, while most of our efforts may appear to be focused on adding new collections, we are most zealous about defending, honoring, and protecting existing ones.

A couple of notes about my activities as your archivist.

In May of 2023, Dr. Blair and I attended the Northeast Jurisdiction Conference on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church at Williamsport, Pennsylvania. There we toured historic sites of the Evangelical Association including the New Berlin publishing house! We met many new colleagues and friends. Next, we stopped by the GCAH Archives of the United Methodist Church at Drew University, where I got a tour of the archives while Sarah did EUB heritage research!

Later, I also presented twice on the subject of archival preservation at denominational historical society meetings. These opportunities help advance not only the awareness of the CEUBH, but also increase awareness of the need for archival preservation in contemporary church life. Our forebears collected and defended the archives and we want to be equally zealous about defending, honoring, and protecting them.

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Remembering for the Future (cont.)

Therefore, to ensure the Center's ongoing work and viability, an endowment campaign is beginning in October to raise $2 million over three years with an ultimate goal of $4 million to undergird the ministry of the Center. The theme of the campaign is, "Remembering for the Future" which is meant to emphasize that we recall our past in order to transform what is to be. Our heritage and beliefs should not be relegated only to yesterdays.

The launch for this campaign will be October 23, 2024 in Dayton with an evening meal. Please place this date on your calendar and prayerfully uphold this effort. Also, consider how you can be a part of reenergizing the EUB message for the church of today and the future. If you have questions or ideas, please contact me at ronmowry1947@yahoo.com. God is instructing us in wondrous ways. Our heritage is one of those ways.

--Ron Mowry

PS You may access the Center's webpages by going to United Theological Seminary's website: www.united.edu. Then go to the top of the page and click "EUB Center." Watch a video and/or read about the Center and its mission!

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Please Join Us

Yearly Membership $25-$499/Lifetime Membership $500* and above

Your membership helps the Center preserve the story and promote the study of the Christian traditions that formed The Evangelical United Brethren Church. Come join with like-minded United Methodists and those in the wider Methodist tradition, former EUBs or EUB history enthusiasts, both lay and clergy, to take part in the ministry and mission of the Center.

Membership is an excellent way to stay in touch with the EUB historical community. It includes an email subscription to the TM and invitations to special events. Your membership dollars help to fund the mission of the Center and are tax-deductible as charitable donations for IRS purposes.

To become a member and support the Center's work, complete our online form at united.edu/eub-heritage. There scroll down to link for Become a Member or Make a Donation. Payment is quick, easy, and safe. For an additional $15, you can subscribe to receive the TM print edition by mail.

* Installments of $100 per year over a 5 year period are available to become a Lifetime Member. Contact Mandy at aswood@united.edu or Mary Ann at eubcenter_info_only@united.edu if you are interested in this. If you prefer to join and pay using US mail make checks payable to: Center for EUB Heritage, 4501 Denlinger, Dayton, Ohio 45426 (add "membership" to note line).